

1.

A TRUE and FAITHFUL  
RELATION

Of the late Dreadful Fire at  
Northampton,

BEGINNING

On *Munday* the 20<sup>th</sup> of this Instant *September*,  
about 9. of the Clock, and continuing till the  
next morning Six a Clock, in which time the  
greatest part of the Town, with the Church  
of St. *Allhallows* and the Market-Cross, were  
consumed to Ashes, together with most of the  
Inhabitants goods lodg'd in the Church, and  
near the said Cross.

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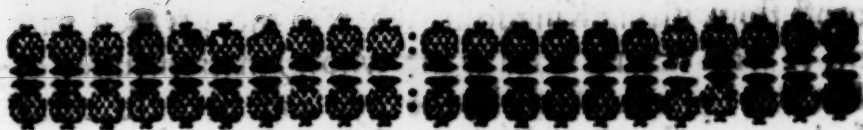
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Inhabitants Goods lodg'd in the Church and near the  
said Cross.*

**I** Hope I need not, and I am sure I do not take de-  
light in recalling to mind the calamitous triumphs  
of the sad and ruinous Elements of fire. All that  
were not concern'd remember with amazement,  
and all that were remember with sorrow the sad ef-  
fects

fects of it, in *London* the Famous Metropolis of this most flourishing Kingdom, wherein the greatest part of, (I wish I could not say the whole) nation suffer'd. But this I mention only by the by, and because upon such an occasion I could not possibly avoid it.

*Northampton*, the Tragical Subject of my present discourse, was a Town of that eminence, that it would appear very impertinent to describe, or which is all one to commend it, a Town so well known, and resorted to for its Trade, so beloved for its situation, and so eminent for its beauty, that to enlarge my self in the commendation of it would seem every way impertinent, therefore I shall say no more of it then what is in order to the miserable calamity that hath lately befallen it.

On Munday the one and twenterh day of this Instant *September*, about noon happened in it a most dreadful Fire in *September*, that Fatal Month in which began that never to be forgotten destruction of this most glorious City; of which remarkable judgment, none that ever besel the Nation, of this kind, could be a more exact parallel, for (besides that it began in the same month) in the strangeness of its original, the suddenness of its ruin, and in proportion the extent of its desolation I think I may say it exceeded: I am sure it equall'd it in the deplorableness of its conflagration. All that knew *Northampton*, knew it to be a spacious, compact, and glorious Town, admirable for its stateliness of structure, and dimentions of the street, which were almost



almost all consumed by this Tiranous Element within the space of thirty hours.

The Fire began as I have said about 9 a clock near the Castle at the west end of the Town at a thatch'd house in *St. Mary Street*, and though people are apt upon such sad occasions to attribute the original to malice, revenge or some secondary cause, yet questionless God Almighty was the superintendent, and next after him, possibly the neglect of some person or other in the poor woman's house where the Fire began might occasion it. We may all remember upon that day the wind was very high, and we cannot but be sensible that the season hath not been so dry for many years past. So that though at noon day the Flame could not but be easily discovered, and as a man would have thought, suppressed, yet upon the concurrence of these accidents it so diffused it self as to become unquenchable, and to destroy that once famous Town, as followeth.

The forementioned *St. Mary Street* is wholly consumed quite into the horse-market, all round Drapery hill, and all *Cornhil* burned not a House standing. all *St. Giles Street* consumed to ashes. Burned in *Ship-street* as far as the Rose and Crown and somewhat beyond; Burned in *Bridg-Street* as far as *James Balies* at the Sign of the three Pots for twopence, only hear and there a house standing, and in short, so universal was the destruction, that dividing the Town into four parts, more than three of them are burned, for there is left nothing standing more then the Bridg, a little of the South

South quarter, and a place they call Coston-end, which are only the corners and as it were the out-skirts of the Town.

The people terrified with the suddainness and unexpectedness of so dreadful a judgment were all struck with a strang horror and amazement not knowing (poor souls) which way to avoid the sad and dismal effects of it, some willing to preserve their houses, covered them with wet blankets, &c. for while they endeavoured to save their houses they lost their goods, and others, despairing of that, while they endeavoured to preserve their goods, they hastarded their lives. But what was most remarkable was the burning of the Market-Cross which stood upon Corn-Hill so far distant, from houses that in human reason it should not have been fired, but the people throng'd and crowded their houses stuff about it so thick that at last some of the goods taking fire they were all burnt, and with them, the Cross down to the ground.

They had four Churches of which the most famous was that of St. *Allhollomes*, standing as it were in the heart of the Town, the people took for a sanctuary as well in a temporal as a spiritual sence, and all whose habitation were adjacent brought as many of their goods as possibly they could thither, but alas we see by wofull experience that this element spares not even those sanctify'd houses, but makes them urns to themselves as they are to the deceased: and so it was here, for the seizing on it burn'd not the Church it self, but all that

that was in it. The three other Churches that were not so considerable were in the remoter parts of the Town, so that they came not within the Reach of the fire but are yet standing as monuments of Gods mercy that he has yet left the inhabitants places where they may make their Supplications to him who is a consuming fire.

There are many discourses among the Towns Folk (as I have already intimated to you) how this fire began, and some will not believe but that it was done by treachery, because that at the very beginning of it the Town was in a flame in several places far remote from the places where it was first discover'd, but sober persons having no reason to suspect any such malicious villains in that neighbour-hood, conclude the suddain spreading of it to be occasioned by the thatch of the house, blown by the violence of the Wind and on a suddain carried into distant places in the Town though undiscerned by them in the great amazement they were in, which I look upon to be the soberest and most rational account, that I have yet heard on.

And thus in short I have given you the most exact and compendious Relation of this lamentable accident, of which I was an ey-witness, and in which (I am sure) I was a considerable sufferer and I have done it the rather because I have observed upon such occasions so many false, or at best imperfect relations to be Printed and Published by those who regard neither the satisfaction of the people in general, nor the prejudice they

may do to persons concern'd in particular, but write any thing that they hear or fancy for a poor inconsiderable gain to themselves. But this I am certain upon examination will prove to be so honest and faithful an account, that none will repent of the pains bestowes in reading it, or the cost.

**F I N I S.**



